

KLAUBER, GRACE GOULD #1

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**An interview with
Grace Klauber Gould 1884-1990
(Mrs. Laurence Klauber)
May 17, 1974**

Interviewed by: W.F. Abernathy

ORAL INTERVIEW WITH GRACE KLAUBER
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NOTE - FIRST OF FIVE INTERVIEWS	

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KLAUBER, Grace

This has been a recording conducted on 17 May 1974 between Mrs. Grace Klauber and Mr. W. F. Abernathy from the Historical Society.

What we'd like if possible Mrs. Klauber is your reminiscences about the town--about yourself--

Reminiscences about myself--of course I was 14 when we got out here. San Diego was only 17,000 at that time and that was quite a contrast from Chicago.

Q: Oh, you came from Chicago? Did you come directly here from Chicago?

Well, except just to stop in San Francisco and a stop in Los Angeles but that was all. Only a few days.

Q: Why did your family come here Mrs. Klauber?

Well, this man died. Dr. Gould, and he's the man that Mr. Klauber speaks of that had an office on Fifth and C. His office was really on C, the corner of Sixth, but he owned the whole block to Fifth so the house--he was in the corner house on Sixth and then he had rented the corner one on Fifth to Dr. & Mrs. Baker--two Doctor Baker's--Dr. Fred and Dr. Charlotte, man and wife and they were very early timers. He was pretty well identified with the Natural History Museum. Very well known in San Diego of 17,000. He was interested in San Diego's welfare, in other words, and they were one of the first people to move over to Pt. Loma for a residence over there on Rosecrans. I think his house is probably the first one on Rosecrans.

Q: Was that in what we now call the La Playa area?

No, La Playa is further south. It was, I would say, a little more south than La Playa. It was on the way to the Army Post, really. It was just beyond that. It's just beyond Talbot, but anyway we used to go by launch. Whether they were day parties or night parties we always went by launch because there was no road and that was Oakley Hall's early ferry system which was the launch. Of course he was very well known, Oakley Hall.

Q: Your family came here--why again?

So Dr. Gould came to California--San Francisco--they have a record of his voting in '69 up there in San Francisco. I never knew him myself, but then he went down to Serra Gordo and he was there I would presume from what I could learn, about 10 years or so when they were mining silver there. But he was

a dentist. I doubt if he did any mining because he was a dentist of that time, but he was interested in geology so I presume that was partly the reason for going in an area like that, that was very bleak, cold winters and hot summers. Then he came here in about 1884 and that is when he started buying property here and there. He owned quite a few pieces of property he left to my father when he died and that was in '97--1897. So then my father who had considerable trouble with asthma in the east particularly every fall, came out here at that time and discovered how much better he felt so that settled it. We all came out, so that's what brought us out.

Q: That must have brought half the people in San Diego out here.

Is that so.

Q: Concerned with health.

Well it was--it was a wonderful place. I should say about the only thing wrong with it in those days were the fleas, and I hate to mention it. But they didn't have the control then you see. The roads were all dirt and there were long summers. The roads were very dry and that's what those things like. So anybody who had dogs or cats had trouble, and we happened to rent a house where they had dogs so we had a severe lesson to begin with. But anyway, of course it was lovely but I couldn't appreciate it. I was too young. I had come from a big city and a big high school where I had had all my friends, so it took me quite a while to say that San Diego was the perfect place, but I certainly should have realized it sooner, because my mother kept saying, "I don't understand, I can't understand, it's so much nicer here."

Q: As kids, we liked the cold and all those things.

I think so. So that's why we came. My father inherited this property so we came out to take care of it.

Q: Oh, I see. How did you happen to meet Mr. Klauber?

In high school. He doesn't remember the first time I saw him and I don't remember the first time he noticed me, but it was in high school because we were in the same class.

Q: What did high school youngsters do to keep themselves busy for entertainment?

Well, I think it's rather interesting to look back on those days because they struggle so hard to entertain children now, you know, to keep them interested. We didn't have much forced on us to keep our interest--we just accepted what was there. Reading, writing, and arithmetic. There were no outside courses, no nothing--it was history, it was mathematics, it was language--German, Spanish or French and they did have a commercial school, they did have that, but that was only two years, the other was

four. But we had splendid teachers. I notice Mr. Klauber speaks of the teachers. They were outstanding teachers. And the first principal I knew was Harry Holliday, just as he says. And then the next one was a Mr. --oh, dear what was that name. I can't think now, but anyway I remember him quite well. They had football, yes; they had baseball, yes, maybe we went and maybe we didn't go to see these games. They were mostly in the boy's department. Girls didn't get too excited about them.

Q: How about picnics and the like?

We made our own picnics. We did have sororities, and to this day I don't see the extreme harm in them because--I think it was probably the state board of education that abandoned them all, but immediately after they were forced out of the high schools, we learned that they were forming clubs up there. Lot of these different groups were having clubs, and it was all the same. But they got this idea as ideas go, that being secret well--it must be--they had the same thing right after we left as our sorority but I think that was part of my pleasure. I enjoyed it very much.

Q: When did you graduate from high school?

'03. Only 15 in our class. I was the president, Mr. Klauber was editor of the Russ magazine. Oh, yes, they had a magazine which interested many of the students.

Q: I've heard many people talk about going up to Palomar and going various places to picnics. Was that kind of general?

Well, it wasn't general until people had automobiles. But with the Klauber family--his father seemed to be devoted to country life, and they would go out to the country and take a whole day to get there--places like Alpine or Descanso because it would take nearly all day to get to Descanso by these horse carriages or bus. They didn't have busses, they had these long talley ho things to take people.

Q: How did you spend your time as a young girl?

I had a lot of fun according to some old diaries, but I apparently enjoyed it. I must have been bored sometimes, I am sure I was, but I did a little kindergarten work so that took mornings for a while. But goodness when I look back, \$10. for a month as kindergarten assistant in public school.

Q: That's unreal.

And I have a niece who is getting \$125. back east in a similar position, and she things that's pretty sad.

Q: Where was the town?

Well, this was called bankers hill up here because--My brother-in-law had a big home there, and another banker by the name of Fishburn had a home directly across here next door to that lot. My father built a home there. There were only these two houses. Now there's the big apartment. The Fishburn home was torn down. Eugene Daney, a lawyer, bought it after the Fishburn's left. Later then he died in Los Angeles. But there were two bankers and the Garrettson home was just north on that end of the block. The next street is Kalmia. So they had a big home there. So that's three bankers and then about 1910 a banker built this house. So that's four bankers then the Garrettson's son-in-law who was also in the First National Bank. The Garrettson family started the First National Bank. I would say in the '80's and the son-in-law built a house back of the Garrettson's home so that's what--five bankers or six. So it got the name of banker's hill.

Q: Was this a general movement, say, from the Golden Hill area?

No, that came later I'd say. But there were very nice homes. The Garrettson's home--there were two or three Garrettsons but this was the only one here. But here were several of the family, I would say, three I think, over on that Golden Hill area--E and 25th, E and Broadway at 24th. What was that last question?

Q: I was just wondering about the growth of town out in that area?

I had a number of friends over there at that time and enjoyed going over there. Of course we went by street car and only went as far as 25th and D, not Broadway then, but D. But the Klauber home was still further, and to go out there they would meet the street car with a horse and rig to take their friends way around because there were canyons and you couldn't get as far as 30th and E. Two canyons between 30th and 24th or 25th.

Q: What was your reaction to the fair when it was first thought of--or the development of Balboa Park?

Well, I think I appreciated it, I enjoyed it, but I had an infant born in July so I didn't get there too often, but I do remember some very wonderful symphony concerts that I would attend.

Q: Was Mr. Klauber involved with that project?

No, no he wasn't. He was too young in business I guess. He didn't start working for the San Diego Gas and Electric until January 1911, but it was the later one. He wasn't too active either, as far as the Exposition was concerned, because he was managing the Gas and Electric Company by that time.

Q: How about the growth of this area. Was this area affected growth-wise by the fair?

I would say it was. Certainly going out that way--homes that had outlooks and views, the lots went very fast. Because when my father built there, all that area north was just land, nothing else.

Q: Did you know Kate Sessions at all?

Yes, I did know her a little bit.

Q: I guess she was kind of instrumental in a lot of the planting up in Balboa Park?

Very much so. I can remember that a lot of that area was trees, and we knew it as a park for San Diego and we crossed through it to go to high school and we walked over from here. There were three or four girls from this neighborhood my age and half a dozen boys, I'll say, and we'd go over in groups, boys not with the girls in those days, they'd either be in front of us or back of us, but we'd walk over. There was a definite path, and it crossed over at Juniper and went straight down a little ways because there was a canyon that went way down as far as B Street. I'd say that took in Sixth. A very lovely canyon with homes all along the way that they had beautified just for their own pleasure. And there was a terrific argument when San Diego wanted to cut that through and make Sixth Street all the way downtown. But it stopped just about at Juniper and this lovely canyon and garden that those people had sort of developed themselves for their own pleasure. But she had all that north because she had knowledge of different kind of trees and it wasn't until they did plan that 1915 Exposition that she had a good deal to say with the planting I think.

Q: I wonder how you got your water up here in the early days. Was water a problem around here?

Oh, water was a great problem, yes. Many families said you can't have water more than a couple of inches in the bath tub in a dry season.

Q: Where did you hear, if you know--where did the water come from?

I think that our water came from up there the north end of the city. I'm pretty sure it did.

Q: Was there a reservoir or a well or anything down--?

Yes, there used to be one. It was a little one, but it used to fill up with the rain and if it got to be too bad it would run over and --.

Q: Was that down below the high school?

Yes, it was, down around 16th Street somewhere. But it was very small--it wasn't what you'd call a real reservoir.

Q: Where did your children go to school, Mrs. Klauber?

Of course I went right to high school, but my brothers were still young so they went down here to what we call Middletown then. I don't know whether it's still called Middletown or not. But my children went to the Normal School. Middletown was more or less occupied by Portuguese and the fishing families. And that was a foreign language as well as a different type of people of course. It was only because I think of that and I had a few friends who were teaching out at Normal and they persuaded us that they would get a very good education there and there was no problem then, we didn't have to worry about automobiles and they could easily cross Fourth and Fifth without a worry to get the street car that would take them to Normal. That was then out there where all the automobile location is right now. What do they call it--where you go out for auto driving tests and all that. That's where the Normal School was then.

Q: To what extent did they have a park at the end of the street car line?

Mission Hills--Mission Hills garden. It was very nice.

Q: What was out there?

I don't think it was a San Diego project, I think it was a private project. There was an ostrich farm out there too. But it had been developed very nicely. There was a lot of gardening and trees and a pavillion they called it. I went to a number of parties out there.

Q: It was probably done by the street car company, I suppose, to get people to go out there.

And that was as far as the Fifth Street car went.

Q: And that was beyond the Normal School?

That was just a little beyond the Normal School.

Q: When did the Portuguese families begin to move out of here and go on over to--I suppose Point Loma?

I suppose automobile days after a road was finally built. And that was around 1910 or '09 sometime. And they could drive over there, I imagine.

Q: You must have had a beautiful view from here out over the harbor?

Oh, we did. My father took quite a number of pictures--nothing in the bay, just water. No airfield at all I can assure you, no sign of one only mud flats when there wasn't water.

Q: Then you could watch the building of North Island--the growth of that?

Oh, I belonged to the Zlac Rowing Club and we rowed over there quite often.

Q: Oh, you belonged to that rowing club. That's kind of an interesting group--.

There was nothing over there except a couple of little shacks and somebody who raised pigs and he purchased garbage from San Diego and it would go over in these--what do you call them flat floats?

Q: Barges?

Barge effects, but that was all that was over there.

Q: You could watch Convair grow, Consolidated grow and North Island and the whole thing--.

There was absolutely nothing there in those days.

Q: What was the reaction of San Diego to the transfer of the fleet to this area when the Navy--?

Oh, I think business and the Chamber of Commerce liked it. My brother-in-law was one of the presidents and they were very active entertaining Navy and things happening like that. That was about the time I'd say they became more active and the city really began to grow.

Q: Mr. Klauber was a real expert in--I've read in there about his snakes, etc. Did he have any here around the house?

Oh, he had a laboratory and a workroom down in the basement.

Q: Were you interested in these too?

No, no, I wasn't. I didn't hinder any of this work. I mean I didn't object to it. I didn't interfere.

Q: Would you have liked to have interfered?

No, somehow I'm not good at holding animals--little animals. Of course I abhorred rats and mice because they went so fast. And it was very difficult--and I finally wanted something, I thought, and I had canaries, but even so it was very hard for me, I couldn't instinctively hold that little bird easily. I did all I could to take care of it but it wasn't easy for me to take hold

of it and I couldn't think of holding a wiggling snake.

Q: Well, I remember reading when the San Diego Gas and Electric, when they were putting that line out from Pala--the electric line. The workmen were to capture as many snakes as possible to send them to the zoo, I didn't realize until I was reading that your husband had a lot to do with that.

Oh, yes, he asked them to and probably provided the containers and equipment. And of course you had to be careful about a rattle snake. You have a long stick with a noose on the end.

Q: Were there many snakes around here in town?

Right in town no, except in canyons in those days. Garter snakes and such, but I don't know whether rattlers were very evident. They probably were in Mission Valley and canyons that were not too well built.

Q: Were there many dances and that sort of thing around here?

Yes, they had beautiful parties here. There was a group of women as I recollect who were very up and coming and very modern in their type of entertaining and very cultured, let's say, because their style was of the nicest and to me, as I look back, it was a privilege that we happened to meet so many of those women because a number of them were in this area. And some of those wives of retired Captains and Majors or Colonels--we thought a Major or a Captain was most important then, and there were several over there on Fourth Avenue.

Q: Was most of the entertaining done privately in private homes?

Yes, but there would be big balls even these fraternities--and that was way back in 1900, these fraternities--and sororities--you've heard of the Florence Hotel that later became Robinson and we had a number of parties there and big dances they'd be too, over in Coronado Hotel. They all seemed to know how to do it. It was a very gentle type of entertaining compared to even some you hear about now, because now it's usually a barbeque or something casual. But then it was very often very special.

Q: What was Old Town? What was it's status in the early 1900's?

Well, it was Old Town, but it was quite deserted. They had the old Bandini House of course and then Ramona's Home was featured but it was pretty much broken down. It wasn't really Ramona's Home, but that was what it was called and drew the crowds that way.

Q: I guess the street car company did that.

Yes, you could get there part way but you took a train to go to La Jolla--an old train.

Q: Did you go to any of these land sales like over in Ocean Beach?

No--or over in Sunset Cliffs. There was a lot of excitement--there was a man--Mills I believe--who developed Sunset Cliffs. I think that was the name.

Q: How about the growth on the other side of Balboa Park? Had it done as much?

Of course it did go, but I think the area closest to the Park developed the best, better standards, better standards of homes and beyond that there were the smaller ones, and then it wasn't until--was it Kensington and further out that they began developing bigger homes again. People wanted to be back away from the ocean I guess.

Q: Well, did you girls in the Rowing Club--was it a swimming sort of thing too?

No, it was entirely rowing.

Q: Were there any beaches close by that people frequented?

No, I think a few people would go down here to the bay before it became polluted in the earliest days. I think the people who lived in the bay area around here did go in the water probably.

Q: How about the beaches in Point Loma, were they used at all?

They probably were when people began living there, but oh, my, they didn't begin to live over there to any extent like they are now, I'd say may be up to the 20's or something like that. And they are building homes and filling up the place.

Q: What was your interest around here, Mrs. Klauber? Were you interested in any clubs after the children got up and about?

You mean after I was married?

Q: Yes.

Well, the Wednesday Club was my social activity, I'd call it, but it's also a literary one, and then I worked with the Boys' and Girls' Aid for my conscience angle. At least it would be something worthwhile, I figured. I was also on that Board for a long time.

Q: What was the Wednesday Club?

Well, the Wednesday Club--there again--and I'm terribly impressed when I think of it. Here were some women who formed it in 1897 I believe. They were very--really literary types and had a great love of that type of living that produced an impetus to want to take more advantage than what they had. For instance, very few of them probably had college so they just went on from there. They had evidently, through Scribners Magazine and Harpers Magazine that was so popular, you know, they could get their inspiration from them about their new books, because they certainly went at it in a literary style from all angles in that club.

Q: Was there anything other than an interest in literary things involved in that club?

Well, they staged and they had programs of the theatre and once a year they had what they called "Play Day" and they still do, and they had an interest in art so that they would have speakers on that subject, but in earlier days they had more members producing programs than they do now. Bring in outside speakers.

Q: Mostly it was you yourselves generating--

Well, I didn't belong then, I was too young, I just knew about them through--you see my husband was the youngest of a family of 12 children so the older sisters--one was as old as my mother--almost like two generations. So when I married him they were certainly very generous and kind and friendly, and often took me so that is how I became acquainted with the meetings.

Q: Were people at all conscious about this Theosophical Society over here on Point Loma?

Oh, yes, very.

Q: Was there any impact of that on the people here in the Wednesday Club for instance or any group?

No, I doubt if the Wednesday Club paid any attention about it. They may have had some program that I never heard about. I know that they were conscious of her and one of my earliest experiences--the Zlac Rowing Club would provide entertainment other than rowing and that probably was our social interest to those that belonged. I think there were about 100 members when I belonged, now there are more. Different groups would have different forms of entertainment. I was taken on several long trips where they would have these long--what do they call those long horse and rigs--they had long seats on both sides. It wasn't exactly a tally ho, because they were crosswise you know. They were very cold. They wouldn't be closed in there we sat--but it

was a long arrangement and there we sat on both sides of those things being taken around on trips through the country and I saw a good deal of the country in that way. And I had one experience and we were taken to Point Loma and there was one man here and I ought to mention him too, Henry Palmer, was very generous to the club and he would be responsible most of the time for these very delightful and entertaining trips because they were informative too, because we learned about country areas where some of us couldn't go. We didn't have horses and drays and we didn't have automobiles. So he took us on this long ride and we went to the end of Point Loma and this was my first sight of San Diego from over there. I would say it was about 1906 or something like that. We went first to the Theosophists, the Universal Brotherhood they were. She broke off from the Theosophists in England, I believe they were, and she formed her group and called herself and her property and institution over there the Universal Brotherhood. Probably a slightly different thought or belief but I don't know what it was. So we went to this home first and were served a delightful lunch and then went on down to the end of the Point and back. It was a great experience. It had just rained a day or two before and that was one of those views that one could get over there that made San Diego so famous, because you had at the top snow on the mountains and below you had a little city, you didn't have much then. Then you had green--lots and lots of green because you weren't so built up then and then this very blue water so that a day or two after a good rain around here it was perfectly beautiful. So we went there, but as I remember these women looked--I don't know--no spirit. As if they were sort of drilled and no independent thinking of their own. They just didn't look very well nourished as I remember them.

Q: But they lived over there?

They lived over there and what's more she brought children there, and I happen to know one man right now who is a very prominent San Diegan, and there maybe more, but this one I know, who told me that he was raised in that school. Where he came from I don't know. Whether he was an orphan or what, but she brought children here from Cuba. She brought them from quite a few places.

Q: If you have no objection to telling me who the man is we might be able to follow up and find out if he would like to tell something about that place?

Well, I don't know whether he would or not. Well, you could just say you heard about it but don't say who.

Q: Oh, no.

It was Fred Goss. Mr. Goss is very active with the symphony, I don't know if you've heard of him or not.

Q: I've heard the name but that's about all.

He told me he was over there but he didn't have anything unkind to say about it. It's just my memory of seeing these--but I know that she did get into some kind of trouble and she did have to abandon the school and give up those children. I think they were loved, but I think they were strictly disciplined and very much watched over so they were to be brought up in that belief.

Q: Were you involved with the zoo at all or was it only your husband?

No, he was the only one involved. And that was the beginning. It started with Dr. Wegeforth.

Q: I read what he was saying about it in there. What was San Diego like in the depression or were you affected at all by that here?

Yes, we were effected a little bit, but not seriously. I just remember that my daughter started at Stanford that year or the following. She started in was it 1930 or 1929 just about that time. And I do know that when my son was ready to go, which was two years later, we had to put it off one year because we couldn't have two of them at Stanford but we didn't have too hard a time ourselves. We had always economized--we wanted to be sure of the future so we had always lived rather carefully, not extravagantly.

Q: I'm trying to get a feel for San Diego during that period of time?

Mr. Klauber did lose some investments but he was on a salary so he didn't really suffer from that at all.

Q: Is there any particular memory or ideas that you would like to share about your early life in San Diego or subsequent, or the development of any of the institutions?

I don't know what to say about sharing, but I do like to tell when they talk or complain about the freeway, for instance, beside the high school I can always come out and say yes, we used to walk across this canyon up and down one side and up the other never dreaming what was going to happen because all of that area was vacant. And I have a few Kodak pictures of it and the old Russ building before it was torn down. The present high school. I just love to remember that country section not wild as it is today, not built up. I am not devoted to the high buildings. I know it means progress, but I know there are a lot of empty offices too.

Q: There are an awful lot of empty offices.

I do think that San Diego is a beautiful place to be. I am very grateful for the wonderful friends I have made. They are all very wonderful people.

Q: We had the opportunity to settle anywhere when I retired and we chose San Diego.

I think we were lucky. We sort of grew up with the city--my husband did and several of my friends did, and my brother did.

Q: What ^{the} Society would like to do if at all possible--is to--there are some photographs that are badly needed--we don't want the photographs--but we would like copies. We have a fellow that worries about photograph and that sort of thing--Wayne Fabert--and he--and there are some that he knows of that have appeared in other publications of the entire Klauber clan if you will, and he would just love to get some copies of some of your photographs and some of the--

You mean of the Klaubers?

Q: Some time, if you have no objection, he would like to call or get in touch with you and see if he could get copies of some of these photographs. Do you know Sylvia Arden who is our librarian?

No, I talked to her on the phone.

Q: Sylvia and the Society are always eager to get their hands on early material.

I have a lot of early San Diego in the form of pamphlets and things of that type, and she thinks they would be in a better place up there. Well, I'll show them to you and you can tell her.